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SCIENCE

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 30, 1914

MULTIPLICITY OF CROPS AS A MEANS OF
INCREASING THE FUTURE FOOD
SUPPLY¹

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ECONOMISTS prophesy a deficiency in the world's food supply. The cost of living everywhere portends accuracy in their divination. The fast and furious struggle between nations and individuals for land upon which to grow food augurs lean years to come. Census enumerations of population presage sooner or later a dearth of ammunition among the multiplying peoples of the earth to carry on the battle of life. Of all this you need to be reminded rather than informed.

So many men have stated and attempted to solve the problem of the future food supply that it would seem that the subject has been wholly talked out from the facts at hand. Indeed, there has been so much said and written about hard times at hand and famine ahead that I doubt if you are pleased to have your premonitions reawakened by further forebodings and to be forced, through the prestige of the president's chair, to give attention to a subject which has been so much discussed. Thrashing over old straw in the presidential chair is, I quite agree with you, a most abominable practise and I have done my best to bring a few sheaves of grain to the thrashing I am now beginning.

Agricultural economists discuss three rather general means of securing a food supply for those who live later when the earth teems with human beings. These are: conservation of resources; greater acreages under cultivation; and increased

MSS. intended for publication and books, etc., intended for review should be sent to Professor J. McKeen Cattell, Garrison-on-Hudson, N. Y.

¹ Presidential address, Society for Horticultural Science, Washington, D. C., 1913.